

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 SS-15 CPR-01 PA-01 INR-10
SY-05 CIAE-00 USIE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY MASERU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8377
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, LT
SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT OF KING MOSHOESHOE TO U.S.

REF: A. STATE 59941 (NOTAL), B. STATE 50258,

1. REF A ADVISED POST THAT LESOTHO EMBASSY, WASHINGTON HAD BECOME AWARE OF PROPOSED PRIVATE VISIT TO THE U.S. BY KING MOSHOESHOE II AS A RESULT OF A ROUTINE MAILING BY U.S. FOREST SERVICE TO LESOTHO EMBASSY OF A PAPER INVOLVING PROPOSALS FOR THE KING'S VISIT TO A FOREST SERVICE FACILITY. LESOTHO CHARGE REPORTEDLY WAS IRATE ABOUT NOT HAVING BEEN INFORMED ABOUT VISIT BY HIS SOVEREIGN AND TELEPHONED FOREIGN MINISTRY HERE MARCH 7.

2. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF REF B EMBASSY ATTEMPTED TO CONTACT SECRETARY TO HIS MAJESTY, MR. LEBOPO. UNFORTUNATELY, MR. LEBOPO WAS OTHERWISE OCCUPIED THROUGH MARCH 6. HE CALLED AT THE EMBASSY MARCH 7 AND REVIEWED AT LENGTH WITH CHARGE PROPOSED PROGRAM SET OUT BY DEPARTMENT IN REF B. ALL SIGNALS WERE GO. MR. LEBOPO EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH KING'S PROGRAM AND PROVIDED ALL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY DEPARTMENT IN REF B. CHARGE ASKED MR. LEBOPO SPECIFICALLY WHETHER THE PROPOSED TRIP WAS CLEARED WITH GOVERNMENT. HE REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. LEBOPO SAID HE WOULD CONSULT WITH THE QUEEN AND WITH GOVERNMENT ON THE DETAILS

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OF THE PROGRAM AND WOULD CONTACT CHARGE ASAP.

3. CHARGE PREPARED LENGTHY MESSAGE TO DEPARTMENT ON FOREGOING DISCUSSION WITH LEBOPO. HOWEVER, PRIOR TO TRANSMISSION, MARCH 8, MR. LEBOPO CALLED AT THE EMBASSY TO SAY THAT THE PROPOSED VISIT "HAD BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL A LATER DATE" DUE APPARENTLY "TO LACK OF SUFFICIENT TIME". CHARGE SUSPECTED THAT THIS WAS AN INDICATION

THAT THE TRIP HAD NOT, IN FACT, BEEN FULLY CLEARED WITH GOVERNMENT.

4. FOLLOWING RECEIPT REF A, CHARGE AGAIN SPOKE WITH MR. LEBOPO WHO AGAIN ASSURED ME THAT THE KING'S TRAVEL HAD BEEN CLEARED WITH GOVERNMENT. CHARGE ADVISED MR. LEBOPO THAT, IN ANY CASE, LESOTHO EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAD LEARNED OF THE TRIP WITHOUT HAVING BEEN PREVIOUSLY ADVISED BY THE MINISTRY HERE. CHARGE SURMISED THAT LESOTHO EMBASSY COMMUNICATION TO MASERU HAD TRIGGERED POSTPONEMENT OF HM'S TRIP. LEBOPO AGAIN ASSURED CHARGE THAT HM HAD INDEED CLEARED THE TRIP BEFORE RETURNING TO ENGLAND. I EXPRESSED REGRET TO MR. LEBOPO OVER POSTPONEMENT.

5. AT THIS POINT EMBASSY IS UNCLEAR WHY LESOTHO EMBASSY, WASHINGTON HAD NOT BEEN ADVISED. COMMUNICATION WITHIN GOVERNMENT HERE ADMITTEDLY IS VERY POOR BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONCEIVE THAT, IF HM HAD DISCUSSED THE TRIP WITH PRIMIN, THE MATTER WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FONMIN. THE LATTER, WE ARE TOLD, HAS NO PARTICULAR BRIEF FOR HM. DOUBTLESS IF HE HAD BEEN LEFT OUT, AS WOULD APPEAR TO BE THE CASE, HSI REACTION ON BEING ADVISED BY LESOTHO EMBASSY, WASHINGTON WOULD BE TO REACT STRONGLY AGAINST THE PROPOSED VISIT. ACCORDING TO DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS, ROC AMBASSADOR LIU, ARRANGING ROYAL VISITS CAN BE EXTREMELY TRICKY BUSINESS HERE. OTHER MISSIONS IN MASERU HAVE ENCOUNTERED DIFFICULTIES SIMILAR TO THE PRESENT ONE IN ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE ROYAL VISITS ABROAD.

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6. BELIEVE DEPARTMENT SHOULD REMAIN VAGUE ABOUT DEGREE OF PLANNING DONE FOR HM'S TRIP SHOULD LESOTHO EMBASSY MAKE FURTHER INQUIRY. EMBASSY HAS HAD NO REACTION TO THIS MOMENT FROM FOREIGN OFFICE. WE INTEND TO LIE LOW BUT WILL REPORT, OF COURSE, SHOULD THERE BE FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THE PROPOSED VISIT IS ON ICE.

STOKES

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NNN

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Draft Date: 09 mar 1978
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Decapton Note:
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